

How the Global Economy Stole My Job

By Carla M Henthorn

Help me Rescue Ohio Jobs. I worked at the Rubbermaid plant in Wooster, Ohio from 1995 to 2004 until the global economy stole my job. We made trashcans, hampers, laundry baskets and other everyday items that you can find in your home.

The plant closed and more than 800 people lost their jobs because greedy retailers like Wal-Mart forced Rubbermaid to sell products for less than it cost to produce them. In other words, Wal-Mart pressured Rubbermaid to fire everyone earning a living wage - including me -- so Wal-Mart could earn a larger profit. They got away with it because we're in this global economy where they can pay workers in other countries a fraction of our wages.

The threat coming from Corporate America today: Produce products at a lower wage or we'll find someone in another country to make them for us.

I was trained at the plant to be a Material Handler. I was responsible for making sure that 21 machines received plastic pellets and liquid color to produce high quality products. I wasn't rich but I earned a comfortable living: Put food on my table, clothes on my back, and a roof over my head. I was happy.

Then all of a sudden my life was turned upside down by this global economy and my job was gone. The plant was shut down because the workers made a living wage - our average wage was \$12 an hour -- with decent benefits. I was shocked, angry and sad.

What outraged me the most was I couldn't take my skills and get another job in manufacturing in northeastern Ohio without taking a 50% pay cut because corporations and politicians have sent too many good-paying Ohio jobs to foreign countries.

I was so angry about what I experienced that I went to work for the Steelworkers union organizing citizens all across Ohio to fight back. We're asking regular people to join us in sending a strong message to the politicians and greedy corporations: Rescue Ohio Jobs!